position was to maintain an offensive by limited action with definite objectives, and the British Generals made it clear that the full forces of the French and British Armies were to be employed for this end. This point was very emphatically elaborated by me. I pointed out that both France and Great Britain were apt to underestimate the measure of success already achieved, because their standard of comparison was the high and possibly exaggerated hopes with which their offensive began.

Summary of discussion

I asked what would our feelings be if we had lost 45,000 prisoners, that is to say, practically five divisions of fighting men, 450 guns, including some of the heaviest calibre, about 800 machine-guns, had had 36 reserve divisions put out of action, and had lost 70 square miles of territory. Such a feeling of pessimism would have gone through both countries that it might have been difficult to keep the fighting spirit up. Captured documents showed that the Germans were short of material, and we knew that the food problem was much more serious for them than for us. We must go on hitting and hitting with all our strength until the German ended, as he always did, by cracking.

M. Ribot accepted my points. He said that to shut ourselves up on the defensive after three years of war would be a reckless and imprudent policy. We must press on with all our forces. But the question of effectives was really serious, especially for France,

who had stood the brunt of the War practically alone until the British Army was ready. Therefore France must, although putting forth her full strength, guard against excessive losses.

I repeated that we were ready to put the full strength of the British Army into the attack, *but it*